Facilitator Guide

[Jurisdiction/Organization]

[Exercise Title]

[This sample template is designed to assist the user in developing a tabletop exercise facilitator guide. The template is meant only as a basic guide and may not apply equally to all systems.]

This document serves as the [Insert Exercise Title] Facilitator Guide. This document is to be used in tandem with the [Insert Exercise Title] Exercise Conduct Brief and Situation Manual.

This document provides guidance to assist the exercise facilitator and should not be given to exercise players. It gives the approximate timing of delivery for each slide, limited talking points, and supplemental questions or issues to raise during tabletop exercise conduct. It provides limited talking points, as well as questions to be raised during discussion. [Content bracketed and highlighted in yellow represents content that will need to be updated based on the scope of the exercise.]

[As a reminder, any changes made to the Conduct Slide Deck or Situation Manual must also be reflected within this Facilitator Guide.]

EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Name	[Insert the formal name of exercise, which should match the name in the document header]
Exercise Dates	[Indicate the start and end dates of the exercise]
Scope	This exercise is a [exercise type], planned for [exercise duration] at [exercise location]. Exercise play is limited to [exercise parameters].
Focus Area(s)	[Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and/or Recovery]
Capabilities	[List the core capabilities being exercised]
Objectives	[List exercise objectives]
Threat or Hazard	[List the threat or hazard (e.g. natural/hurricane, technological/radiological release)]
Scenario	[Insert a brief overview of the exercise scenario, including scenario impacts (2-3 sentences)]
Sponsor	[Insert the name of the sponsor organization, as well as any grant programs being utilized, if applicable]
Participating Organizations	[Insert a brief summary of the total number of participants and participation level (i.e., Federal, State, local, Tribal, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and/or international agencies). Consider including the full list of participating agencies in Appendix B. Delete Appendix B if not required.]

Point of Contact	[Insert the name, title, agency, address, phone number, and email address of the primary exercise POC (e.g., exercise director or exercise sponsor)]

INTRODUCTION

Facilitators guide exercise play and are responsible for ensuring that participant discussions remain focused on the exercise objectives and making sure all issues are explored as thoroughly as possible within the available time.

A key Facilitator role is to encourage all participants to contribute to the discussion, and to remind them that they are discussing hypothetical situations in a no-fault environment. Facilitators also build and maintain an environment where all the participants feel comfortable speaking honestly and where differences of opinion are respected. Facilitators should ensure that everyone feels included in the conversation and has an opportunity to participate. **Facilitators should not lecture or dominate the discussion, but rather keep conversations moving.** Additionally, Facilitators may want to use an issues list or "parking lot" to document valid points that are raised by participants during the exercise but that risk taking the conversation off topic; these items can be assigned for later discussion to the appropriate persons.

AN EFFECTIVE FACILITATOR

- ► Keeps discussions on track and drives play to meet exercise objectives.
- ► Controls group dynamics and manages strong personalities.
- ► Speaks competently and confidently without dominating the conversation.
- ► Has subject-matter expertise or experience.
- ► Has an awareness of local plans and procedures.
- ► Captures key findings and discussion points

Administrative Considerations

Facilitators should discourage side conversations, ensure cellular phones are turned off or made silent, and control group dynamics. Table arrangements for the exercise should try to maximize the interaction between the Facilitator and participants. During the exercise, Facilitators need to constantly be aware of time constraints, notifying participants about progress and moving the discussion toward completion of exercise objectives when time is running short.

OBJECTIVES

The exercise objectives are as follows:

Exercise Objective	Core Capability
[Insert objectives]	[Insert capability aligned to objective]
[Insert objectives]	[Insert capability aligned to objective]
[Insert objectives]	[Insert capability aligned to objective]
[Insert objectives]	[Insert capability aligned to objective]
[Insert objectives]	[Insert capability aligned to objective]

AGENDA

Date	[Insert Date]
Location	[Insert Location]
[Time]	Welcome and Introductions
[Time]	Module 1: [Title]
[Time]	Break
[Time]	Module 2: [Title]
[Time]	Break
[Time]	Module 3: [Title]
[Time]	Break
[Time]	Hotwash
[Time]	Closing Comments

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS [TIME]

Slide	Time	Topic/Issue	Facilitator Notes/Questions
[1]	**[Insert time]**	**Call to Order/Title Slide/Welcome**	*When participants are ready:* ● Call room and participants to order ● Introduce topic of exercise: [Insert Topic or First Phase] ● Introduce self and note [organization] support ● Provide brief opening remarks and role during exercise
[2]	**[Insert time]**	**Welcome and Introductions**	● Introduce [insert senior ranking participant] in exercise and call upon them to offer opening remarks ● Introduce [insert senior ranking participant] in exercise and call upon them to offer opening remarks
[3]	**[Insert time]**	**Administrative Remarks**	● Provide safety and administrative remarks for participants
[4]	**[Insert time]**	**Exercise Schedule**	● Provide overview of each item in the exercise schedule

EXERCISE OVERVIEW [TIME]

Slide	Time	Topic/Issue	Facilitator Notes/Questions
[5]	**[Insert time]**	**Exercise Overview**	*Briefly review the exercise purpose with participants:* ● Examine [insert capabilities] between [organizations] in the [City, State] in response to [description of incident]. ● The exercise will address the following focus area(s): [Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, Recovery]
[6]	**[Insert time]**	**Exercise Structure**	*Briefly review the exercise scope with participants:* ● An [insert duration] [insert exercise] will be conducted incorporating a scenario with [#] modules to examine the operational response of [insert organizations] to [insert threat/hazard description] ● Each Module will consist of two main activities: a scenario overview and facilitated discussions ● The scenario overview will include a detailed description of the current scenario ● The following activity will include facilitated discussions amongst all players regarding a set of specific discussion questions

Slide	Time	Topic/Issue	Facilitator Notes/Questions

[7]	[Insert time]	**Exercise Objectives**	● **[Insert Objective Name]**: [Insert objective description]
			    o **Aligned Capabilities:** [Insert aligned capability]
			● **[Insert Objective Name]**: [Insert objective description]
			    o **Aligned Capabilities:** [Insert aligned capability]
			● **[Insert Objective Name]**: [Insert objective description]
			    o **Aligned Capabilities:** [Insert aligned capability]
			● **[Insert Objective Name]**: [Insert objective description]
			    o **Aligned Capabilities:** [Insert aligned capability(s)]

[8]	[Insert time]	**Exercise Guidelines**	*Briefly review the exercise guidelines with participants:* ● This is an open **no-fault environment** - varying viewpoints, even disagreements, are expected ● Base your responses on **existing plans**, policies, procedures, capabilities, and resources ● Please assume the exercise **scenario is plausible**, and events occur as they are presented ● Decisions are **not precedent setting**; consider different approaches and suggest improvements ● There is **no "hidden agenda"** nor are there any trick questions ● Issue identification is not as valuable as suggestions and recommended actions that could improve [focus area] efforts; problem-solving efforts should be the focus.

MODULE 1: [TITLE] AND [TIME]

Slide	Time	Topic/Issue	Facilitator Notes/Questions
[9]	**[Insert time]**	**Module 1: [Title Slide]**	• Briefly introduce title slide for Module 1 ([Insert theme title])

[10]	**[Insert time]**	**Module 1: [Key Issues]**	[Week day, Month Day, Year]
			    • [Insert scenario events]
			    • [Insert scenario events]
			    • [Insert scenario events]
			[Weekday, Month Day, Year]
			    • [Insert scenario events]
			    • [Insert scenario events]
			    • [Insert scenario events]

[11]	**[Insert time]**	**Module 1: Discussion Questions**	**[Insert Exercise Objective Name]**
			    • [Insert discussion question]
			    • [Insert discussion question]
			    • [Insert discussion question]
			Notes: [Insert notes, such as follow-up questions and/or background information]

MODULE 2: [TITLE] AND [TIME]

Slide	Time	Topic/Issue	Facilitator Notes/Questions
[12]	[Insert time]	Module 2: [Title Slide]	• Briefly introduce title slide for Module 2 ([Insert theme title])
[13]	[Insert time]	Module 2: [Key Issues]	[Weekday, Month Day, Year] • [Insert scenario events] • [Insert scenario events] • [Insert scenario events] [Weekday, Month Day, Year] • [Insert scenario events] • [Insert scenario events] • [Insert scenario events]
[14]	[Insert time]	Module 2: Discussion Questions	**[Insert Exercise Objective Name]** • [Insert discussion question] • [Insert discussion question] • [Insert discussion question] *Notes: [Insert notes, such as follow-up questions and/or background information]*

MODULE 3: [TITLE] AND [TIME]

Slide	Time	Topic/Issue	Facilitator Notes/Questions
[15]	**[Insert time]**	**Module 3: [Title Slide]**	• Briefly introduce title slide for Module 3 ([Insert theme title])
[16]	**[Insert time]**	**Module 3: [Key Issues]**	[Weekday, Month Day, Year] • [Insert scenario events] • [Insert scenario events] • [Insert scenario events] [Weekday, Month Day, Year] • [Insert scenario events] • [Insert scenario events] • [Insert scenario events]
[17]	**[Insert time]**	**Module 3: Discussion Questions**	**[Insert Exercise Objective Name]** • [Insert discussion question] • [Insert discussion question] • [Insert discussion question] *Notes: [Insert notes, such as follow-up questions and/or background information]*

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HOTWASH [TIME]

Slide	Time	Topic/Issue	Facilitator Notes/Questions
[18]	[Insert time]	Hot Wash	The facilitator should hand out a participant feedback form to capture the responses in writing and aggregate them in the After-Action Report. *Provide a brief overview of the purpose of the Hot Wash:* ● The purpose of the Hot Wash is to debrief the exercise and provide participants with the opportunity to discuss their general observations o Are there any other issues you would like to discuss that were not raised? o What strengths did you observe in relation to meeting exercise objectives? o What areas should be examined further or need additional work (areas for improvement)? o Was the exercise beneficial? Did it help prepare you for follow-on testing? o What did you gain from the exercise? o How can we improve future exercises and tests?

CLOSING REMARKS [TIME]

Slide #	Time	Topic/Issue	Facilitator Notes/Questions
[19]	[Insert time]	Closing Remarks	• Call upon [insert senior ranking participant] in exercise to provide closing remarks • Call upon [insert senior ranking participant] in exercise to provide closing remarks

ENDEX [TIME]

Slide	Time	Topic/Issue	Facilitator Notes/Questions
[20]	[Insert time]	EndEx	• Adjourn